
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 430

AN ACT CONCERNING THE OPERATION OF EMERGENCY VEHICLES.

SUMMARY:

This bill allows an emergency vehicle operator to proceed past a school bus displaying flashing red signal lights on a highway or private road, in a parking area, or on school property, but only after slowing down or stopping to the extent necessary for the safe operation of the emergency vehicle. By law, the vehicle must be using an audible signal, such as a siren, and flashing or revolving lights.

Under current law, all vehicles, including emergency vehicles, must stop for a school bus displaying flashing red signal lights. The operator must stop at least 10 feet from the front when approaching and 10 feet from the rear when overtaking or following the bus on a highway or private road, in any parking area, or on school property, except at a traffic officer's direction.

By law, violators are subject to a \$450 fine for a first offense and, for a subsequent offense, a fine of between \$500 and \$1,000, imprisonment for up to 30 days, or both (CGS § 14-279(b)).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2014

BACKGROUND

Emergency Vehicle Operation

By law, emergency vehicle operators may:

1. park or stand the vehicle notwithstanding other laws;
2. proceed past a red light or stop signal or stop sign after slowing down or stopping to the extent necessary for the safe operation of the vehicle;

3. exceed posted speed limits as long as they do not endanger life or property; and
4. disregard statutes, ordinances, or regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specific directions.

The exemptions apply when the emergency vehicle is using an audible warning signal device, such as a siren, whistle, or bell, and visible flashing or revolving lights that meet standards specified in law.

Legislative History

The Senate referred the bill (File 122) to the Judiciary Committee, which replaced the original bill with this substitute. The original bill reiterated that an emergency vehicle was required to stop for school buses displaying flashing red signal lights.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 25 Nay 0 (03/13/2014)

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 39 Nay 0 (04/14/2014)